



Office for Victims of Crime

OVC Fact Sheet

Advocating for the Fair

Treatment of Crime Victims

Initiatives to Combat Violence Against Women

Background

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), in collaboration with other Office of Justice Programs (OJP) bureaus, and public and private interest groups and agencies, administers funding to programs that develop strategies, discuss issues, and make recommendations to prevent and combat victimization of women. For the purpose of this fact sheet, violence against women includes sexual assault, campus crime, stalking, and domestic violence.

In forming partnerships with other government agencies and organizations, OVC pools resources and support in order to develop new alternatives and directions for resolving violence against women. For example, OVC has joined together with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to target family violence in Indian Country. OVC also has formed a partnership with the Violence Against Women Grants Office (VAWGO) within the Office of Justice Programs to work on many projects. One such collaboration funded the Battered Women's Justice Project which conducts training and technical assistance to develop effective law enforcement, prosecution, court, and advocacy practices on behalf of battered women. OVC grants finance efforts by communities to create and adopt locally responsive approaches that encourage collaboration among all sectors. Such sectors include victim service providers, victims' advocates, law enforcement authorities, health care providers, and community organizations representing educators, businesses, members of the clergy, and others involved in the fight to end violence against women.

Funding

OVC's funding is based on the Crime Victims Fund, which is derived, not from tax dollars, but from fines and

penalties paid by Federal criminal offenders. Nearly 90 percent of the money collected each year, \$363 million in 1997, is distributed as formula grant programs to States to assist in funding their victim assistance and compensation programs. The other portion is placed in a discretionary fund that assists Federal crime victims and supports training and technical assistance programs or demonstration projects that can be used as models of "promising practice." Since 1988, OVC has distributed over \$2 billion to the States to support victim services and compensation.

VOCA Victim Assistance Program

(Formula Grant Programs to the States)

Through the Victims of Crime Act, OVC funds the VOCA Victim Assistance Program which provides nearly 3,000 local victim services and programs nationwide. These programs offer victims a wide range of services, including crisis counseling, criminal justice advocacy, and shelter. To date, using FY97 funds, States have funded 1,881 domestic violence programs, 1,484 adult sexual assault programs, 332 rape crisis programs in hospitals, and 675 domestic violence shelter programs for a total of \$222,278,099. For information about Federal funding available in your State, please contact the agency designated by the Governor to administer the VOCA Victim Assistance Program. In many cases, the same agency has been designated to administer VAWA funding.

Discretionary Fund Initiatives

The following list of initiatives shows the collaborative commitment from OVC, OJP offices and agencies, as well as, other Federal agencies and organizations by devoting resources and attention to building and strengthening the

response of communities nationwide to ending violence against women. In addition to sharing information about existing programs, OVC invites those people who touch the lives of crime victims to propose plans that establish practices and provide materials that can be readily used by communities to assist in curbing violence against women. Many of the products produced from these and other OVC grants can be obtained through the OVC Resource Center.

Sexual Assault Programs

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) Development and Operation Guide

Minneapolis Research Foundation, Sexual Assault Resource Service

OVC awarded funds to the Sexual Assault Resource Service (SARS) of the Minneapolis Research Foundation to develop a SANE guidebook. The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners program is an innovative treatment model for sexual assault victims and was developed by SARS in the 1970's. Requests from communities across the nation for information and guidance to develop this program in their own community has prompted the need for this guidebook. The SANE guidebook, available in 1998, will lead interested individuals through the process of establishing and operating a SANE program and comprehensively addressing clinical, legal, and operational issues. The second phase of the project will provide technical assistance through a series of 12 to 15 regional training workshops; develop a SANE Web site for dissemination of information and technical assistance; and evaluate program efficacy through statistical tracking of new and existing programs, focusing on outcomes that measure the impact of SANE services on sexual assault victims and their communities.

Building Skills for Sexual Assault Responders

Minneapolis Research Foundation, Sexual Assault Resource Service

OVC awarded a training and technical assistance grant to the Sexual Assault Resource Service of the Minneapolis Research Foundation to address the need to improve the quality and continuity of services to victims of sexual assault. The grantee is currently developing a comprehensive training and technical assistance package for crisis response, advocacy, and mental health services that can promote personal recovery and healing. The grantee will pilot-test the training in Colorado in April 1998 and in Minnesota in May 1998. During the second phase of the

project, the grantee will modify the curriculum based on results of the pilot-testing and conduct a series of regional training workshops for direct service providers.

Justice for Deaf Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services

OVC awarded a grant to the Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services in Seattle, Washington to develop a training and technical assistance package for five cities across the country. This project originally started in Seattle providing services and support for deaf victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Now, the project will work with the deaf communities in Boston, Austin, Minneapolis, Rochester (NY), and San Francisco to replicate the program.

Domestic Violence Programs

Educating to End Domestic Violence

American Bar Association

The American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Domestic Violence developed a report detailing various innovative programs law schools have implemented to teach about domestic violence and assist victims of domestic violence. The program staff also developed a series of recommendations for replicating these types of initiatives in other schools. This publication, *When Will They Ever Learn? Educating to End Domestic Violence*, was funded by OVC to encourage and assist law schools to establish, develop, and expand curricula in the classroom and clinical programs that both teach students about domestic violence and assist victims.

Training Lawyers to Respond to Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse

American Bar Association

This project involves two divisions of the ABA—the Commission on Domestic Violence and the Commission on the Legal Problems of the Elderly. Both Commissions have joined together to develop a model national training curriculum to improve the responses of general practice and family lawyers to victims of elder abuse and domestic violence. The Commissions will develop, pilot test, revise, produce, and disseminate a model curriculum that can be replicated or adapted by bar associations and other organizations interested in providing this training.

Battered Immigrant Women Program

American Bar Association

The ABA Commission on Domestic Violence, in cooperation with AYUDA ("HELP"), a grassroots agency for Latina victims of domestic violence, are finalizing a curriculum for victim advocates and attorneys on the Battered Immigrant Women Provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The Commission will conduct three trainings in 1998 and four trainings in 1999. This curriculum will include information about VAWA's recently issued regulations, immigration law, cultural issues, and ways to assist victims who want to petition for residency. For more information about upcoming training programs, contact the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence at 202-662-1737.

Domestic Violence: A Training for Dental Professionals

University of Minnesota

The School of Dentistry and the Program Against Sexual Violence at the University of Minnesota received grant funding to produce and pilot test a training videotape and curriculum for dentists and ancillary staff on how to effectively intervene with victims of domestic violence. A comprehensive training packet that will enable dental teams to easily apply the intervention model to their own office setting will accompany the video.

AMWA Online Health Care Provider Educational Project on Domestic Violence

American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)

This program will develop an interactive online physician and health professional education program on domestic violence on the AMWA Web Site. In doing so, AMWA will utilize a curriculum developed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund. For further information contact their Web Site at <http://www.amwa.doc.org/edproj.html>.

Promising Strategies and Practices to Enhance Workplace Response to Victims of Domestic Violence

The Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPPF)

Domestic violence hampers a victim's ability to perform in the workplace. This project has created a blueprint to transform workplaces into a supportive environment for victims of domestic violence. In doing so, the FVPPF conducted a "victim needs assessment." The project will create materials outlining model policies and programs that can be jointly adopted by employers and labor unions. Finally, the project will work with trade and labor organizations and others to build a network for distributing the model policies and practices. These networking and

collaborative activities will serve to increase public awareness of domestic violence as a workplace issue.

Full Faith and Credit Provision, Violence Against Women Act

The following three initiatives are organized under the Violence Against Women Act's (VAWA) Full Faith and Credit provision. VAWA provides Full Faith and Credit for all State and Tribal protection orders under 18 USC Section 2265. OVC has been working closely with the Violence Against Women Grants Office (VAWGO) to develop programs to assist in the implementation of this provision.

- ***Full Faith and Credit Training and Technical Assistance Project***

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc.

The goal of this project is to develop effective law enforcement, prosecution, court, and advocacy practices to promote accessible, consistent enforcement of civil and criminal protection orders in appropriate State and Tribal courts throughout the country.

- ***National Conference, Across State Lines: Collaborating to Keep Women Safe***

In 1997, OVC provided partial funding for a national conference, "Across State Lines: Collaborating to Keep Women Safe." This conference brought together teams of law enforcement and court professionals from over 40 States and Territories to begin planning for the implementation of the Full Faith and Credit Provisions of the Violence Against Women Act. The conference also provided needed training and technical assistance to these State teams on the latest issues involving Full Faith and Credit.

- ***Domestic Violence In Kentucky: Model Law Enforcement Response***

OVC has worked closely with the Community Oriented Policing Services and VAWGO to establish a demonstration program in Kentucky to implement the Full Faith and Credit provisions of the Violence Against Women Act. The program is both an intra-State and inter-State enforcement effort. Kentucky has focused its implementation efforts on the development of model forms, enhancement of its central database of protection orders, training and technical assistance for law enforcement and court personnel, and outreach and education efforts for victims of domestic violence.

Victim Advocates in a Specialized Domestic Violence Court

Criminal Court of New York City

OVC is working with VAWGO to establish a domestic violence court within the Criminal Court of New York City. The domestic violence court, which will handle misdemeanor offenses and pre-indictment felony contempt cases based on violations of criminal court orders of protection, will be staffed by a dedicated judge who will use the authority of the Court to coordinate and monitor the responses of all of the criminal justice and social service agencies charged with addressing domestic violence. The project will fund victim advocates to work closely with victims and the judge.

Violence Against Women Act Regional Training

OVC has joined with VAWGO, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, and other Department of Justice (DOJ) components to cosponsor a series of DOJ regional video teleconferences for Federal, Tribal, and local personnel explaining provisions of the Violence Against Women Act. These regional teleconferences will be conducted twice in 1998 in five regions throughout the country.

Domestic Violence Fatality Reviews: A National Summit

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
Communities nationwide are requiring a uniform method of investigating and assessing the efficacy of services provided to victims of domestic violence. In response to this need, the State Justice Institute and OVC joined to fund the Family Violence Project of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to convene a group of national experts on the issue of domestic violence fatality reviews. This group will compile procedures, protocols, and models resulting from a national forum and use that information to develop an educational training module and informational materials on promising practices for fatality review teams. The finished products will be disseminated nationwide for use by new and ongoing fatality review teams seeking to establish or improve procedures and programs.

Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
With the support of OVC and the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Family Violence Project of the

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges will develop a set of recommended guidelines on intervening in domestic violence and child abuse cases. The grantee will compile materials from promising programs and provide that information to a multidisciplinary committee of national experts on the subject, which will meet several times to develop the guidelines. Guidelines will be used by child protective services staff, law enforcement, attorneys, courts, family preservation agencies, and battered women's programs.

National Teleconference on Domestic Violence

In May 1996, OVC worked closely with the South Carolina United States Attorney's Office to cosponsor a National Teleconference, "*When the Cry Comes..*" to train law enforcement officials and victim advocates on best practices when handling a case of domestic violence. This teleconference aired at 165 locations, in 45 States, across the country, viewed by nearly 4,000 criminal justice professionals and victim advocates. In June 1997, OVC again joined the South Carolina United States Attorney's Office to cosponsor and provide funding for a followup teleconference, "*When the Cry Comes... from the Children.*" This teleconference provided training to law enforcement officials and victim advocates on handling domestic violence cases when children are involved.

Violence Against Women Act Specialist

OVC funded a Violence Against Women Act specialist position to assist EOUSA in providing training and technical assistance to all presently employed and new Assistant U.S. Attorneys, Federal Victim-Witness Coordinators, Advocates, and Specialists from U.S. Attorneys' Offices nationwide concerning the effective and efficient implementation of relevant provisions of the Violence Against Women Act.

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE™) System Support

OVC is working with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and VINE™ to extend notification services to victims of crime. The VINE™ system is automated to link police, prosecutors, and corrections officials to victims. VINE™ provides confidential notice of inmate status changes, such as release and relocation, which allows victims to take necessary measures of precaution to protect themselves from further harm. This project is intended to improve compliance with victim notification laws and enhances the criminal justice system's response to victims.

For Further Information

Contact the OVC Resource Center for a list of recent awards, announcements of grants, and information about the application process or send an e-mail to askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

More information about the Office for Victims of Crime is available through the following sources:

OVC 202-307-5983
OVC Web Site <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/>
OVC Resource Center 800-627-6872
OVC Resource Center Web Site <http://www.ncjrs.org>

Visit the OVC Web Site
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/>
for the latest information on
Victims Issues.

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